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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4863rd meeting of the Security Council, held on 19 November 2003, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"*The Security Council*,

"*Takes note* of the final report (S/2003/1027) of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (the Panel), which concludes its work, and *emphasizes* the connection, in the context of the continuing conflict, between the illegal exploitation of natural resources and trafficking in raw materials and arms, which the Panel has highlighted;

"*Condemns* the continuing illegal exploitation of natural resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, especially in the eastern part of the country, *recalls* that it has always categorically condemned these activities, which are one of the main elements perpetuating the conflict, and *reaffirms* the importance of stopping them by exerting, if need be, the necessary pressure on the armed groups, traffickers and all other actors involved;

"*Urges* all States concerned, especially those in the region, to take the appropriate steps to end these illegal activities, by proceeding with their own investigations, on the basis, in particular, of information and documentation accumulated by the Panel during its work and forwarded to governments, including through judicial means where possible, and, if necessary, to report to the Council;

"*Reaffirms its determination* to closely monitor compliance with the arms embargo imposed in resolution 1493 of 28 July 2003 and *expresses its intention* to address the problem posed by the illicit flow of weapons into the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including by considering the possible establishment of a monitoring mechanism;

"*Emphasizes* that the prompt re-establishment, by the Government of National Unity and Transition, of State authority throughout the territory, and the establishment of competent administrations to protect and control exploitation activities will constitute decisive elements for ending the plundering of natural resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

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"*Encourages* the Government of National Unity and Transition to implement the resolutions adopted in Sun City in April 2002 within the framework of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue;

"*Encourages* States, trade-sector organizations and specialized bodies to monitor the trade in raw materials from the region in order to put an end to the plundering of natural resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly within the framework of the Kimberley process;

"*Encourages* States, the international financial community and the international organizations concerned to provide the aid needed to the Government of National Unity and Transition and to cooperate closely with it in order to support the establishment of national institutions capable of ensuring that the natural resources are exploited transparently to effectively benefit the Congolese people;

"*Expresses the wish* that convening at an appropriate time an international conference on peace, security, democracy and development in the Great Lakes region of Africa will encourage the promotion of regional cooperation to the benefit of all States concerned;

"*Expresses its intention* to continue following closely this situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo."